

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 00089 061344Z

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8979

S E C R E T CAIRO 0089

NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR EILTS FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG US XF

SUBJECT: TRAINING OF EGYPTIANS IN SAUDI F-5 PROGRAM

REF A. STATE 1672 B. STATE 1586 REPEATING JIDDA 49

C. CAIRO 12855

1. I MET BRIEFLY JANUARY 6 WITH PRESIDENT SADAT,
WITH VP MOBAREK ALSO PRESENT, FOLLOWING VERY GOOD
MEETING SADAT HELD WITH CODEL MORGAN.

2. I RECALLED TO HIM THE DISCUSSION HE HAD HELD
WITH ASST SECRETARY ATHERTON AND YOU ON EGYPTIAN
PARTICIPATION IN F-5 TRAINING PROGRAM IN SAUDI
ARABIA AND MENTIONED OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT HE WAS
GOING TO INSTRUCT GAMASY TO WITHDRAW EGYPTIAN TRAINEES
FROM PROGRAM. I ASKED SADAT WHETHER HE HAD HAD OPPORTUNITY
TO DO SO, NOTING THAT OUR INFORMATION FROM JIDDA
INDICATED NO TERMINATION ACTION HAD YET BEEN TAKEN.

3. SADAT REMEMBERED DISCUSSION AND SAID HE HAD
COMMUNICATED WITH SAUDIS ON THIS MATTER. HOWEVER,
HE OBSERVED THAT "SAUDIS HAD THEIR PRIDE" AND IMPLIED
SOME RESISTANCE ON THEIR PART TO WITHDRAWAL OF
EGYPTIANS SINCE THEY WERE "ALL ARAB BROTHERS" IN THIS
TOGETHER.

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4. I POINTED OUT THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WHICH COULD BE RAISED IF TRAINING OF EGYPTIANS IN F-5S WERE TO BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. I NOTED PARTICULARLY FACT THAT EGYPTIAN PILOTS WERE SCHEDULED ON JANUARY 10 TO ENTER FLYING PHASE OF PROGRAM, WHICH WOULD HAVE HIGH VISIBILITY. I RECOMMENDED THAT EGYPTIANS INVOLVED IN PILOT TRAINING AND ALSO MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN IN ORDER TO AVOID THIS SITUATION.

5. SADAT EMPHASIZED HE HAD NO OBJECTION TO DELAYING EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM AND RECOGNIZED IMPACT THIS MIGHT HAVE ON CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF AID BILL. HE ASKED VP MOBAREK TO ARRANGE FOR DELAY OF EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION IN SAUDI TRAINING PROGRAM, AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF AID BILL WAS COMPLETED, AFTER WHICH WE COULD DISCUSS THE MATTER AGAIN.

6. SADAT THEN ASKED WHEN CONSIDERATION OF THE AID BILL WOULD BEGIN. I REPLIED THAT THE VISITING CONGRESSMAN WHOM HE HAD JUST SEEN, TOLD ME THEY WERE ALREADY WORKING ON IT AND I EXPECTED THAT CONSIDERATION WOULD PROBABLY GO ON IN EARNEST AFTER CONGRESS RETURNED FROM RECESS IN MID-JANUARY. I REPEATED IMPORTANCE THAT NOTHING, SUCH AS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS PREJUDGING ANY SUBSEQUENT US ACTION ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE, BE ALLOWED TO DAMAGE EGYPTIAN AID PROSPECTS AND I LEFT IT AT THAT.

7. COMMENT: SADAT'S VAGUENESS ABOUT THIS WHOLE MATTER AND HIS SUGGESTION OF SOME SAUDI RESISTANCE TO EGYPTIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM TRAINING PROGRAM LEAD ME TO PROPOSE A FOLLOW-UP OF THIS CONVERSATION WITH MOBAREK IN ORDER TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT URGENCY OF THIS "DELAY IN EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION" PRIOR JANUARY 10 IS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD AND THAT SUCH ACTION IS TAKEN. I NOTE THAT MOBAREK WILL BE LEAVING FOR ADDIS ABABA ON JAN 9

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TO HEAD EGYPTIAN DEL TO OAU SUMMIT, SO THAT THIS FOLLOW-UP, IF CONSIDERED USEFUL, SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN JANUARY 7 OR 8. ALTERNATIVELY, I COULD RAISE THIS WITH FAHMY WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT AT ATHERTON MEETING WITH SADAT. ADDITIONALLY, IT WOULD SEEM USEFUL FOR EMBASSY JIDDA, IN LIGHT OF SADAT'S COMMENTS, TO SEEK CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF SAUDI ATTITUDE RE COOPERATION IN THIS MATTER.

8. IF DEPARTMENT CONCURS, WOULD APPRECIATE PROMPT
INSTRUCTION TO FOLLOW UP WITH MOBAREK (OR FAHMY).

9. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PASS
THIS MESSAGE TO EMBASSY JIDDA.
MAESTRONE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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